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ARTICLE X.

A SYRIAC CHARM.

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OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Presented to the Society April 21st. 1892.

The following Syriac charm was obtained by the Semitic Museum of Harvard University from the Rev. Dr. Shedd, missionary in Urmî, Persia. It is written on strips of parchment pasted together at the ends, making a scroll six feet long by two inches broad. It contains about 900 words, written on 244 lines. The text is embellished by headlines etc. in vermillion, and three pictures illustrating the conflicts of saints with demons.

I have to thank Prof. I. H. Hall, of the Metropolitan Museum, N. Y., and Prof. R. J. H. Gottheil, of Columbia College, N. Y., for valuable suggestions in the translation.

TEXT.

ܠܠܐ ܨܒܝܢ ܫܬܝܢ ܕܥܢܝܢ

ܡܥܕܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ . . .

ܡܡܥܬܐ ܠܥܝܢܐ ܕܐܠܐ

ܕܐܠܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܕܥܢܝܢ

ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ

ܡܡܥܬܐ

[Here follows St. John i. 1-5. Thirteen lines in the charm.]

ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ

ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ

ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ²⁰

ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ

ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ ܡܡܥܬܐ

ܕܥܐܠܡܐ ܨܨܕܐ ܨܨܨܐ
 ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ
 ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ
 ܨܨܨܐ ܨܨܨܐ ܨܨܨܐ ܨܨܨܐ
 ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ
 ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ
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 ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ

TRANSLATION OF THE TEXT.

Further, through the power of the Lord Jesus Christ * * * we begin the safeguard of a man. The Holy Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the proclamation of John.*

[Here follows the passage, St. John i. 1-5.]

By the power of these ten holy words of the glorious Godhead, and in the name [of] אֱלֹהִים אֱדֹנָי, El-Shaddai, Adonai, Lord Sabāōth, [and] by the power and by the command of the Lord Jesus Christ, I bind and I expel and I objurgate the evil and bewitching eye, and the eye green and heavy, and the eye of men and the eye of women, and the eye of every kind of man and beast.† And I bind wounds [? and] the stroke of rupture (hernia) and all sicknesses, and all diseases and all plagues and all rebellions and all *incubæ* of nights, of demons and of rebel-

* Or simply 'according to John'. The MS. uses the loan-word ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ, the Greek κήρυξις. The translation I give in the text is literal, though hardly as idiomatic as that in this note.

† Or 'of the whole γένος (*familia*) of Adam and Eve.' ܕܡܕܢܝܬܐ means *genus humanum*. This rendering of ܡܕܢܝܬܐ, suggested to me by Prof. Gottheil, is perhaps preferable to that in the text, for which we should expect ܡܕܢܝܬܐ, *bestia, fera*; or ܡܕܢܝܬܐ, *serpens*, Gen. iii. 1. The MS. is badly torn at this point, only the edges of the last part of the word being visible. I think this reading correct, further, because the charm does not deal with beasts at all, but with human beings and demons.

121 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם (שְׁמַח
 חֵם מִן חֵלֶם חֲמַח
 etc. חֲמַחֲמַח) חֵם חֵם 120

[Here follows the rest of the Psalm, from this line to the end, being fourteen lines in the charm.]

122 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם
 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם
 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד

(אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם)
 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם
 123 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם —
 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם
 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם —
 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם
 אֲנִי מַחְמֵד לְכָל חֵלֶם מִן חֵלֶם

[Here follows the 121st Psalm entire. After verse 1 is written the following in red ink (except *חֵלֶם*), probably as an interpretation or gloss: 'that is, I expect (look for) a guardian angel from every hill at every hour against weakness.* The section closes with the following prayer:] May these incantations be a protection for all young children: verily and truly, Amen.

The ban of Mar Giwargis, the illustrious martyr, which is useful against terror and fear.

The prayer and petition and request and supplication of Mar Giwargis, the illustrious martyr, which he prayed and asked from

* With regard to the reading *שְׁמַח*, the text is quite clear, and I take it from *שְׁמַח*, Aram. *ܫܡܚܐ*, Pa. *ܫܡܚܐ*, *expectavit, praestolatus est*. Vd. Pss. xxv. 5; xxxiii. 18 and 20; xlii. 5 (Payne-Smith, 2623). Cf. Pesh. and LXX of Ps. lxix. 20; *ܫܡܚܐ ܕܡܚܐ ܕܡܚܐ*, and *προσεδόκησεν (ἡ ψυχὴ μου)*. *Expectavit cum fiducia*. It seems easiest to take *ܫܡܚܐ* as *ܫܡܚܐ*, *egregiorus, angelus tutelarioris*, as in line 106. Or, omitting *ܫܡܚܐ*: 'awaken hope from every hill,' etc.; or, 'hope is awakened;' part. pass. Pal. [Gottheil.] For a similar use of the word, vd. Cant. v. 3. The letters *ܫܡܚܐ* seem to have the meaning *videlicet, scilicet*.

146 ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
 150 ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ

[Here occurs the second picture. It represents a saint on a yellow horse casting a fiery dart at a demon in the shape of a huge serpent or dragon.]

156 ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
 160 ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ
ܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ

God and said : O Lord of lords, grant me this request : that any man who makes mention of thy holy Name and of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the name of this thy servant Giwargis—may there not be in his house [any] who are blind and dumb, and may there not be born in it any maimed or a paralytic. But cause to pass from him and from his house all sicknesses and all diseases, and those visions which are of night and by day. And everyone who writes thy holy Name and suspends it upon himself, and my name—thy servant Giwargis—may he not have the evil and envious (fascinating) eye, nor fear, nor tremor, nor load (*incubus*)—neither by night nor by day—nor

ܕܡܢ ܫܡܥܠܐ ܫܡܐ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܕܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܕܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ²³⁰
 ܕܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ

[Here is the third picture, showing a saint on a red horse charging at a demon in a fantastic human body. The face is characterized by one feature : a large eye in the centre.]

ܕܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ²⁴⁰
 ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ ܡܢ

[The rest is lost. All words enclosed in parenthesis throughout the above are written in vermillion in the MS.]

of his tender-mercies. Heal, O Lord, thy hand-maid in thy mercy, and raise from her sickness in the multitude of thy tender-mercies, Gauza the daughter of Shima ; that we may praise thee for (concerning) thy redemption which thou hast performed for her ; the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever, Amen.

For diwas, ['devils, wretches,' etc.; this is in red ink.]

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, in thy name, אֱלֹהֵי אֲשֶׁר אֱלֹהֵי, El Shaddai, Adonai, Lord Sabāōth, Prince* of the worlds ; the prayer and petition and

* Hero, chief, giant. Cf. the Greek *Τίρας, Τίγαντες*, 'the fabled sons of earth and Tartarus'; Heb. הַנְּבִרִים, Gen. vi. 4; and Arab. الْجَبَّار, which is applied to the constellation of Orion; cf. Job, ix. 9. [Michaëlis, p. 132.]

ܕܡܪ ܫܒܘܪ ܐܬܬܝܬܐ
 ܕܡܪ ܫܒܘܪ ܐܬܬܝܬܐ
 ܐܡܝܢ

supplication of Mar Shabur and Urshabur, son of Shaburā, leaders* and true preachers at this time, and they all * * * [The rest is lost.]

* Loan-word, Greek ἀθλητής, Lat. *athleta*, 'commander, master, Christian hero, saint,' etc. It is written both ܐܬܬܝܬܐ^ⲗ and ܐܬܬܝܬܐ^ⲗ.